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LAFAYETTE IN VIRGINIA

INSTITUT FRANÇAIS DE WASHINGTON

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2

LAFAYETTE IN VIRGINIA

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS

FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS IN THE VIRGINIA STATE LIBRARY AND THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

THE JOHNS HOPKINS PRESS
BALTIMORE
1928

The Lord Baltimore Press
BALTIMORE, MD., U. S. A.

Hartford October the 11th 1824

My dear Sir

When I Heard of Your going to France, I Heartily Lamented I could not Have the Honour to Receive You there, But in the same time Anticipated the pleasure to Wait upon You this Winter in our French Capitale - Your Voyage to Europe is Ever Considered as a Favorite Wish Of Mine, and on Every public and private Accounts am Happy to Think You are Last Have Consented to Go - permit me My dear Sir, to further to Carry My Wishes, and in Case our Respected Doctor Franklin is indulged in His Wishes for Retirement, Let me Hope My Country May be for Ever with You, as To Obtain Your Consent for a Longer Residence - an Event which, Both as a French Man, and an American; I most Sincerely Desire.

Upon Entering Again these Blessed Shores of Liberty My Heart Throbbed For Joy, and Nothing Could Add to My Satisfaction But the Flattering Reception with which I Have Been Every where Honoured - I Wish it Were in My power to Make a much Longer Stay, But will at Least Employ the time I Have in Visiting as many of My Friends as I Can - From Mount Vernon to this place I Have Been Enjoying Their Company in their Egyptian Wath and am just from Fort Schuyler where it was Thought My Presence, and Even My Personal Influence with the Indians Could be of Some public Utility - The Business is Just Began, But in Case You Wish to Know the Temper of these people, so far as Your Name Influence in their Business is one I Think You will find the whole Nation Congenial to whom is Will be Agreeable to

Mr. Madison 1830

I am now going to Boston, Rhode island, and by route to Virginia where good Washington is again inviting for me - We mite together proceed to Philadelphia, and I inclined also to the Maritim By the time Congress are there, in order to pay my respects to them - I do grant such a Federative System may be fully followed by all the States as will insure their Eternal Union, and of Course their Interior Happiness, Commercial Wealth and National Consequence! Nothing New from Rhode island Expressing the Eagerness that Associations were Entered into by those Legislatures to Encourage Exports and Imports to produce a Good effect - a few Indians Have Been over towards the New Settlements But Nothing of Any Consequence - Should a little Dispute be Mentioned, That happened upon the Back Lands of Connecticut and Pennsylvania, it may be Affirmed that this Missing affair is Vanishing into Nothing.

My Home, Dear Sir, my Family, and Any thing that is mine are entirely at Your disposal, and I beg You will come and be with de Lafayette as you would are By your Brother's side - Her Knowledge of the Country may be of Some use to wish Jefferson whom she will be Happy to attend in Every thing That may be Agreable to Her - Indeed, my Dear Sir, I should be Very Angry with You, if either You or She did not Consider my House as a second Home, and with de Lafayette as Every Happy in Every opportunity to wait upon Mrs Jefferson.

My Dear and Most Affectionate Respects wait upon Doctor Franklin - Be pleased also to remember me to the Bachelor Young Franklin, and other American Friends - Should you Now be with Mr Adams, I beg You will present my Re- to Him - Adieu, my Dear Sir, with Every Sentiments of Attachment and Regard I Have the Honour to Be

Your Obedient Humble Servant

Lafayette

FFERSON UNDER DATE OF OCTOBER 11, 1784
on pages 61-62)

INTRODUCTION

The juvenile charm and chivalresque qualities of the Marquis de Lafayette have so often been emphasized that the letters published here for the first time could rightly be entitled " The unknown Lafayette." Striking as the legend of the French crusader may appear, as it has been molded by popular imagination, it offers to the historian some hardly intelligible features. There is little likelihood that a man of such common sense and clearsightedness as General Washington would have entrusted a mere " boy " with large bodies of troops and important commands, if Lafayette had simply been an enthusiastic and impulsive young volunteer.

As a matter of fact enthusiastic as he was, Lafayette had all the qualities of a chief; he was as good a strategist as any Major General in the American army, he looked carefully and painstakingly after the welfare of his soldiers, he had, in addition, an incredible gift to conciliate and, to use his own word, " to harmonize " the most fractious characters. When he was sent by General Washington to take charge of the operations in Virginia he was not only the right man in the right place, but probably the only man in the army who could succeed in preventing the impending disaster.

During the two years which preceded the Virginia campaign of 1781, the Commander-in-Chief, considering that the pivot of the operations was in the Northern part of the country, had sacrificed his native State. With a badly equipped militia, lacking horses, artillery and ammunition, Governor Jefferson cooperated as well as he could with the army commanded by Greene in the South, while trying to give some degree of protection to the State. By the end of 1779, Steuben and Muhlenberg were in charge of about 4000 regulars, and the militia under the command of General W. Nelson may have amounted approximately to the same number. But the population was restless and discontented, both money and subsistences were lacking; the troops had literally to live on the country, and whatever was necessary had to be obtained through impressment.

The situation came to a climax with the treason of Arnold, the occupation of Portsmouth at the mouth of the James river by the British troops and the raid of Arnold against Richmond (January 3-6, 1781).

Washington yielded at last to the entreaties of Jefferson, who voiced the anxiety of the whole State, and on February 20, the Commander-in-Chief gave instructions to Lafayette to proceed by land to Head of Elk, then by convoy down the Chesapeake Bay to Hampton Roads, thence to conduct if possible a punitive expedition against Arnold, with the mission, if the traitor should fall into his hands, to "execute the punishment due to his treason and desertion in the most summary way." The next day Lafayette announced to the Governor of Virginia that he was coming with a detachment of Continentals, assuring him of his "ardent zeal to do anything in his power to cooperate with the Executive of the State, and adding in his naïve English that he would "precipitate" his soldiers as much as he could (*Ms. From New Windsor. Feb. 21, 1781*).

Washington had not decided upon the choice of Lafayette without some very good reasons. Baron Steuben, who up to that time had been in charge in Virginia, had proved himself a very good soldier, but had already had countless difficulties with the civil authorities of the State and the officers of the militia. As no extensive operation in Virginia could be carried out without the whole-hearted support of the State forces, Lafayette was selected as much for his personal qualities, his winning ways, his accommodating spirit and his tact as for his military talents. The history of the following nine months was to prove that once more Washington had been a good judge of men.

Jefferson, at first, answered simply to manifest his real joy at the coming of the Marquis, and to assure him that he would have the pleasure to cooperate with him "with every aid in his power" (*Library of Congress Ms. March 2, 1781*). But as Lafayette had reached Head of Elk much earlier than was expected, the Governor had to confess that he had only limited means and could offer very little aid. It must have irked the proud Virginian to admit that even the unlimited good will promised in his preceding letter would probably be lacking. Knowing Lafayette but by name, thinking of him as a professional soldier and the aristocratic representative of a military nation, the Governor felt that he had to apologize for the unsoldierly attitude of his fellow citizens. "Mild laws, a people not used to prompt obedience, a want of provisions of war and means of procuring them renders our orders often ineffectual, obliges us to temporize, and when we cannot accomplish an object one way to attempt it in another" (*March 10, 1781*). Certainly, he would endeavor to have everything in readiness and the

State Quartermasters were exerting themselves to get horses, but " their exertions were slow and doubtful." The upshot of it all was that the support of the militia was very problematic, that boats could not be had to transport Lafayette's small army from Head of Elk to Hampton Roads, that horses could not be provided to bring the artillery by land. Instead of seaworthy vessels the Governor offered scows which could not be used in " wide waters," and oxen instead of horses. The explanations were rendered less painful from the knowledge Jefferson already had of the " accommodating dispositions " of the young general and in conclusion he could appeal with more confidence to his understanding of the situation:

> I think it proper, therefore, to reduce our expectations from what should be ready to what probably will be ready, and even calculating on probabilities I find it necessary to reduce my own expectations at times. I know that you will be satisfied to make the most of an unprepared people, who have now the war for the first time seriously fixed in their country and have, therefore, all those habits to acquire which their northern brethren had in the year 1776, and which they have purchased at so great an expense (*Richmond, March 12, 1781*).

In his letters of March 12 and March 14, the Governor had again to come to the conclusion that " endeavors shall not be wanting but still they must not be counted upon."

The two letters written in answer by Lafayette on March 16 and 17, exhibit the best qualities of the Marquis, the very qualities which endeared him so much to the American people. Far from complaining about the lack of preparation, he had turned back to the Quartermaster all the saddle horses, field artillery horses and horse wagons that could be dispensed with, and since oxen were available, he had at once requested that 200 be impressed. He even apologized for the " necessity of disturbing the inhabitants of the State of Virginia " and regretted that a siege operation could not be carried " without great expenses and great means of transportation." In his anxiousness to relieve the feelings of the Governor, he thanked him warmly for the good maps that had been provided, although he added that his " farther knowledge of the country must come from personal observation." As a matter of fact, he considered and presented himself as the guest of Virginia, and not as a military commander in charge of the federal troops, with the ordinary scorn of the " regular " for militia men. Above all, he assured Jefferson that he was perfectly familiar with the slight inconveniences and the lack of efficiency that result from popular government; but

there also " numberless blessings " compensated these petty annoyances. Once again, Lafayette had proved that he was a good " harmonizer " and it took more than ordinary qualities to supersede Baron Steuben without hurting the *amour-propre* of the old martinet, to take actual charge of all the operations in Virginia while nominally Greene was in command, and to navigate between the State authorities, the militia, the quartermasters, and a more than lukewarm population of farmers and country gentlemen who resented the impressment of their horses, cattle and wagons by the Continentals. And yet, in spite of all these difficulties, in spite of the fact that sometimes he found provisions but no soldiers and, at other times, militia men but no ammunition (*Ms. Camp near Sleepy Hole, March 20*), he managed to infuse a new spirit and a new " élan " into worn and discouraged troops.

The details of the Virginia campaign have been told in some detail by Lafayette himself in his *Memoirs* and more recently by Mr. Charlemagne Tower, Jr. (*The Marquis de La Fayette in the American Revolution. Philadelphia, 1895. 2 vols*). But while adding some valuable information to the strategical history of the Virginia campaign, the letters published here present a human interest to which it may be permitted to call attention.

It will be seen how using his own money, signing promissory notes, Lafayette equipped his soldiers as well as he could with the help of the merchants and the ladies of Baltimore (*Ms. Baltimore, April 17, 1781*); how leaving baggage and artillery behind, he raced for Richmond, entering the city on April 29th, barely on time to save it from being captured by the English general, Philips, who had occupied Manchester, on the opposite bank of the river, the day before. There for the first time, under these most dramatic circumstances, the young Major General met the author of the Declaration of Independence, in the city just rescued from the hands of the enemy. This was the beginning of a friendship which was to endure for almost half a century, the full account of which will shortly appear in another publication.

But even such a close call had not aroused the Assembly nor the people of Virginia to a clear realization of the sacrifices necessary to save the State from the enemy's raids. The letters of Lafayette to Jefferson and to Jefferson's successor, General Nelson, will clearly show in the young Major General qualities of patience, persistency, endurance and obstinacy, very different and perhaps much more valuable under the circumstances than the dash and showy heroism of a cavalry leader charging at the head of his army. For Lafayette had no cavalry to oppose to

the raiders of Tarleton, except a few dragoons, "without boots" and without horses and to the last minute the legislature insisted that he should not impress either "stud horses or brood mare" because "to take them would be to rip up the hen which laid the golden eggs" (*Jefferson to Lafayette, Richmond, May 14, 1781*). As for the militia, they were daily deserting or rather simply going home, because the season for the harvest was at hand or their time had expired and "you might as well stop the flood tide as to stop the militia whose times are out" (*Ms. July 1, 1781*). "The poor fellows" were hardly to blame, for they had no flour, no ammunition, no arms and in some cases had to fight with spears; small pox was spreading and "a number of the Virginia levies and Pennsylvanians were without overhalls or breeches" (*Lafayette to Col. Davis, Aug. 13, 1781*). County commissioners were "indifferent to the suffering of the army." —"Few men in the field, not a sixth part of what is called for,—a greater number without arms—the greatest part of whom live from day to day upon food that is injurious to their health—without six cartridges per man—and the poor Continentals that will soon be our only dependence falling off for want of spirits and flour"—Such in the words of Lafayette was the situation at the end of August 1781, and he could not help adding "should it be known to Lord Cornwallis he may ruin us at one stroke." And yet with this handful of badly equipped soldiers the "boy" not only held his ground but slowly drove Cornwallis to Yorktown and gave time for Washington's army to arrive. Under these circumstances many a veteran would have lost courage but the young Major General was convinced that it was useless and even "a folly" to complain. With marvelous resiliency he undertook to surmount all obstacles, although as late as the 11th of September he still had to write to Governor Nelson "I could wish to sleep to-night but I fear it will be impossible with the prospect before us for tomorrow. There is not one grain of flour in camp either for the American or French army. What we are to do I know not . . . I am distressed in the extreme, in a thousand ways, and without the power of offering either myself or the soldiers the smallest relief." This was written less than six weeks before the surrender of Cornwallis.

When the campaign was over and the victory of Yorktown had sealed the destiny of the independent United States of America, Lafayette felt that he could not leave the State of Virginia without a word of apology for the few arbitrary steps he had been forced to take during the year. He consequently wrote to Governor Nelson a letter in which reappears

that "delicacy of feeling" so characteristic of the Marquis and that true politeness coming right from the heart which no training can give:

> The anxiety I feel to obtain the approbation of the people of Virginia, induces me to request a very great favor from your Excellency. It is, that you would be pleased to lay before the honorable the Assembly an account of my conduct in executing their recommandations for the impressement of horses. As this was done often in sight of the enemy, and sometimes, as it were from under their hands, it has been altogether impossible, in every occasion to pursue all those forms which I could have wished. But whatever has been done by my orders, will, I hope, appear to have been conducted in the best method which the moment would admit (*October 31st, 1781*).

The war was over, but Lafayette had not volunteered for the duration of the war only. He was to see Jefferson again in Paris and with him he worked with the same industry, the same skill and the same delicacy of feelings to harmonize trade difficulties between the United States and the Kingdom of France. When the new American envoy who was to succeed Franklin as plenipotentiary was about to leave for Paris, Lafayette then in America wrote him one of the most affectionate letters found in his correspondence. Jefferson was taking along with him his young daughter Martha and the Marquis knew that the little girl who had so recently lost her mother would probably feel estranged in a new country. She would be in want at any rate of the womanly affection and guidance so necessary at that age, and so Lafayette ended his letter with these few lines which better than long protestations demonstrated the sincerity and warmth of his feelings:

> My house, Dear Sir, my family, and anything that is mine are entirely at your disposal, and I beg you will come and see Mde de Lafayette as you would act by your brother's wife. Her knowledge of the country may be of some use to Miss Jefferson whom she will be happy to attend in every thing that may be agreeable to her. Indeed, my Dear Sir, I would be very angry with you, if either you or she, did not consider my house as a second home and Mde de Lafayette as very happy in every opportunity to wait upon Miss Jefferson (*Library of Congress. Ms. Hartford, October 11, 1784*).

Six months later, after leaving America with "a reluctant heart," Lafayette wrote to Patrick Henry, Governor of Virginia, a letter here published for the first time as a new indication of his relentless efforts to promote the interests of the young country of which he was proud to call himself a citizen.

Most of the letters published in this *Cahier* are preserved in the collections of the Virginia State Library and were obtained through the

kindness of the State Librarian, Dr. H. R. McIlwaine; a few were found in the Jefferson papers of the Library of Congress, and their origin will be indicated in the foot notes. In all cases the spelling and punctuation of Lafayette have been preserved. Some of the letters are autographed, others were apparently dictated to a Secretary and simply signed by the Marquis, but even in these cases the style and vocabulary do not materially differ from the letters written by Lafayette himself. The American readers will judge of the quality of the English used by Lafayette; it is fluent and intelligible if not always perfectly idiomatic. Such as they are, the historical and human value of these documents amply seems to warrant their publication and they constitute an important addition to the wealth of material already obtainable on the last year of the Revolutionary War.

G. C.

LETTERS

TO

THOMAS JEFFERSON — W. NELSON
PATRICK HENRY — GENERAL WAYNE
COLONEL DAVIS

I

New Windsor, february the 21st, 1781.

Sir,

I am the More flattered By the Command Which His Excellency General Washington Has Been pleased to intrust me, as Independant of the General Good that May be Hoped from this Expedition, it seems to promise an Oportunity to Gratify the High Sense I Have of My personal obligations to the State of Virginia.

I shall from time to time inform your Excellency of the Movements of the Continental detachement that Has Marched from this place—they will be precipitated as Much as I can, and I'll Have the Honor of writing to your Excellency from philadelphia where I intend to preceed the troops.

Begging Leave to Refer you to the letter of the Commander in Chief, and to Express the desire I have to be Honored with a line from your Excellency I shall only Add that with the most ardent zeal to do any thing in my power which May promote the wishes of your Excellency, and with Every sentiment of the Highest Respect I have the Honor to Be

Your Excellency's
Most humble and
Most Obedient Servant
Lafayette.

Addressed: His Excellency Governor Jefferson. E. R.

II

Williams Burg, March the 16th, 1781.

Sir,

your Excellency's favors of the 10th 12th and 14th Having Come Yesterday to Hand, I beg Leave Most Respectfully to offer My thanks for that part of their Contents which is personal—the Exertions of An Unbounded zeal, and a Conduct wholly actuated by Affection and Respect, will, I Hope, justify in some Measure that opinion which Your Excellency and the other Citizens of this State Have Been pleased to Entertain.

from an Early period, Sir, I Had the Honor of Being Admitted to the American Union, when without Means, without foreign Aid, But with a determination either to Conquer or die, our Noble Contest was Carried through so Many dangers and difficulties—long since Have I Been used to those inconveniences that are so far compensated By the Numberless Blessings of a popular Governement. Whenever personal labors, or More difficult ways may Conduct to the same purpose of public good, duty as a Servant of the public, and Affection as a Lover of America shall ever prompt me to Adopt every Measure that you may think more suitable to the temper of the people, or the State of our Circumstances;—the interest Being Commun to All engaged in this Cause, and the interest of Virginia Being particularly Concerned in this Expedition, I do not More Question the good intentions of the State than I do my own on this occasion.—to the Exertions that Have Been Already Made, I know that new ones will Be added to insure the success of the Operation, and the Respect I Have for the Civil Authority in this State Being United to Sentiments of the Most perfect Confidence I shall comply with your Excellency's desire in Laying Before you the State of our wants, and the Requisite Means for the projects of our Expedition.

I Beg Your Excellency will Receive My thanks for the Good Maps that Have Been provided—they perfectly answer the purpose, and My farther knowledge of the Country must come from personal observation.—Baron de Steuben Having told me that Gal. Muhlenberg was ordered to advance his position towards portsmouth, I intend to join the troops under His orders, and shall to morrow set out for His quarters where I may Reconnoitre the works of the Ennemy.—No disposition Can Be made with a sufficient degree of certainty, until the Commanding officer Has found His judgement Upon His own Observations.

I have Read the two Copies which your Excellency Has Been pleased to inclose in a letter of the 10th and Am Very Sorry to see that there is such a cause of disatisfaction. Harmony Being Necessary to the public welfare, I thought it was better for me not to Make any Mention of this Affair. But Am no less obliged to the Confidence which Has Been put in Me, and Which I am Warmly desirous to deserve.

The detachement I brought from West point is still at Annapolis and Cannot Come unless a Superior Naval force is sent for its protection.—the desire of obtaining it, that of taking a local knowledge of our circumstances, and the intention to improve Every Means that May set to Advantage the American side of the Alliance are the Reasons which Have obliged me to precede the Continental troops.—to My Great disappointment we Have not yet seen the french fleet, But they must Be Hourly Expected I owe them the justice to Say that from the Beginning they Have Expressed An Ardent and particular Zeal to be Serviceable to this part of the Continent.

Gal. Stebens Having Entered into a train of Correspondance with the troops, and they that stay in this place Having not yet permitted me to Be thoroughly Apprised of the details of the preparations, I must Get Acquainted with

the local situation and the Minuted Account of our Affairs Before I can either take the Command of the troops, or make more particular Applications for our wants—But I hope that to morrow Before I leave this place I May Be able to write a More Minuted letter to your Excellency.

With the Highest Respect I Have the Honor to Be your Excellency's

Most obedient Humble servant,
Lafayette.

Addressed: His Excellency Governor Jefferson. e. r.

III

Williams Burg, March the 17th, 1781

Sir,

from a conversation with the Quarter Master of the State, I find that there will be a great deficiency of horses, and that none of those which Have Been provided can serve for the purpose of our Artillery.—Under these Circumstances, and in the full Conviction that a transportation of Heavy Artillery and store was Necessary to the Expedition, I thought that oxen Might in some Cases Render the same Service, and the Quarter Master was of opinion that the impressing of them Could Be more largely done.

I have therefore given to Him a Return of Saddle Horses, field artillery Horses, and Horse waggons that Cannot absolutely be dispensed with, and instead of the large Number of draft Horses that were Necessary Both for our Heavy ordinance and that of the french, I have Requested Him to impress 200 oxen.

I am very Unhappy, Sir, to think that this Arrival in this State is Accompanied with a Necessity to disturb its inhabitants.—But your Excellency will judge that a Siege operation Cannot be Carried without Great Expenses and Great Means of transportation.—it is with the Greatest Reluctance that I sign any impressing warrant, But I Hope My delicacy in this Matter will be such as to Render me Worth of the Approbation of the State.

Inclosed your Excellency will find Copies of letters Relating to an affair which I am very little acquainted with.—I beg leave to ask your Excellency's opinion upon the Conduct I am to Hold in this instance, and would Be glad to Have a complete set of the *Militia or other laws* of this

state that I may not interfere with the rights of or through ignorance Be deficient in Respect to the Civil Authority.

With the Highest Respect I Have the Honor to Be

your Excellency's most obdt. Hum. servt.

Lafayette.

p.s. I Request your Excellency to Return me the letter and Copy.

Addressed: His Excellency Governor Jefferson.

IV

Camp Near Sleepy Hole, March the 20th.

Dear Sir,

On my arrival at Suffolk I found that G[al] Muhlenberg had marched down to this place, and was in Hopes to be Enabled to Reconnoitre the Enemy's works, which I think to Be a Necessary measure Before Any plan can be Settled for a Cooperation.—But to My Great disappointment there was no Ammunition in Camp, and (tho' it has been sent for seven days ago) I have not yet Been able to learn when we are to get this indispensable Article.—the only thing I could do was to go down with such Riflemen and Militia as Had a few Cartridges—By this a trifling skirmish was Brought with the loss of one private killed, one officer and one private wounded on our side, and above twenty (four of whom taken) must Have Been lost for the enemy—But I could not Reconnoitre farther than the position to be taken at the time of operations, and the situation of the shipping, as want of Ammunition Rendered it imprudent to Engage.

The Ammunition that is Expected from Hurd will be insufficient even for temporary purposes, and I Hope we may soon get a part of what Baron de Steuben Has prepared for the Cooperation—as to provisions the Baron said to me that three Hundred thousand Rations were Ready in intermediary magazines which would Be successively Reimplaced from our large deposits;—I Have Requested Him to Have the Magazines Most particularly Examined as this is a matter of Great importance.—Should your Excellency Have any doubt on the sufficiency of our provisions, I would Beg leave to Request that immediate Measures Be taken for a collection of flour and live cattle, Hard Bread and salt meat. the Baron Has also assured me that a sufficient quantity of forage would be sent down the River as

soon as the french fleet comes in.—I shall However make bold to Recommend the affair of our Stores and supplies to your Excellency's attention and patronage.

Necessity will some times oblige me to take the unpopular Method of impress, and for fear of losing a precious time I ordered the State Quarter Master to Make use of His part warrant for the getting of oxen and Horses.—But should Be very Happy to Receive from your Excellency Any directions or powers that your Excellency would think the Most suitable to the laws of this state or the Sentiments of its inhabitants.

With the Highest respect I have the Honor to Be
your Excellency's
Most obedient Humble
servant,
Lafayette.

Some months ago, Sir, when I intended a journey to the South ward, I was Honored with a letter of introduction to your Excellency from General Washington,—I am too proud of His friendship, and too desirous to obtain An intimate Acquaintance with your Excellency not to include the letter under this Cover.

Endorsed: Marquis Fayette E. r. March 20,81.
Addressed: His Excellency Governor Jefferson

V

Annapolis, April the 4th 1781.

Sir,

Before this Comes to Hand your Excellency will Have got an Accurate Account of the Action Between the two fleets, where it appears that Notwithstanding their Superiority our Allies obtained the Honor of the day.—But the object of the Expedition was Lost, and the Attack of portsmouth Unfortunately postponed.

On the point of Setting out for the Grand Army, I will at least do my Best for the Relief of the troops destined to the defense of the Southern States—I Hear that General Greene is in want of Ammunition, and Am going to Send on four field pieces to Him, with twelve Hundred Rounds and Near Hundred thousand Cartridges.—Governor Lee Has promised to Have them forwarded to fredericksburg, where I Hope they will meet Horses and Waggons provided By Your Ecellency's orders, as their Speedy Arrival at the Southern Army May prove to be of Essential Service.

Baron de Steuben Having Received orders from General Greene Relating to the forwarding of Military stores to His Army, I give Him Notice of the Measures I Have taken, and Beg Also Leave to Request that Your Excellency Be pleased to forward the inclosed Letters to the Southern Army.

This Harbour is blockaded by two Armed Vessels of the Ennemy, which Makes it Necessary for a part of the troops to proceed By land.—Some light Boats and the Siege Artillery (every thing relating to field pieces and Musketry Being sent to the Southland) will Be able to go By water after the Ennemy have Been Received with some Heavy pieces we are fixing on purpose. By an intercepted letter from the Captain of these Vessels it appears that He is

Requesting a Reinforcement, and Hopes to destroy the Coast in your River.

I Am in Hopes that the french fleet will Soon be able to put to sea, and Have also expectations of their Being Reinforced.

Permit me, Sir, that Respectfully to Your Excellency with the Assurance of the High Regard and Affectionate Sentiments I have the Honor to be with,

Sir,

Your Excellency's

Most obedient Humble Servant,

Lafayette

N.B. the inclosed are Copies of intercepted letters.

VI

Baltimore; April the 17th, 1781.

Sir,

I Have the Honor to inform your Excellency that the detachement under My orders is on his way to Richmond where I Expect to Receive directions from General Greene.—from the intelligence I get of the Number General philip's Army consists of, I apprehend that the State of Virginia must need an immediate Support.—this Consideration alone Could induce me to advance by Rapid and forced Marchs with a part of the detachement, and of course, to impress a great number of Waggons and Horses to forward our Movement.—this Measure I reluctantly Have Adopted, But as Uncommon dangers Require Uncommon Remedies thought that the State of Virginia Being so far interested in this Movement, they would put up with Momentary Inconveniences provided we could Rapidly advance to their Succour. I Beg Leave to Request that the included Be sent to General Greene with the Greatest dispatch as the Contents are of an immediate Importance—I will be very Happy, Sir, if your Excellency is pleased to send Me By the Road through Alexandria and frederick Burg Every intelligence that May Relate to Lord Cornwallis and General philips.

With the Highest Respect I Have the Honor to Be your Excellency's

Most obedient Humble servant

Lafayette.

p.s. I will do myself the Honor to write to your Excellency on My Arrival at Alexandria.

Addressed: His Excellency Governor Jefferson. E. r.

VII

Bowlin Green, April the 27th, 1781.

Sir,

Captain North from Baron de Steuben's Camp Has Been with me last Evening and was directed By the Baron to give me Every intelligence Relative to the Situation.—from what he says I think the Baron is by this time at Chesterfield Court House, And Consider Richmond the precise object for Both parties.

Every Boat that is in the River should be Collected above the falls By which means a communication can be Secured—those that are for the present with the Vessels are of no use to them and will be of Great Service to us.

I wish it was possible to fix some Heavy Cannon upon small Vessels so as to make floating Batteries of Galleys.—I have lately tried the Experience at Annapolis and could derive great Advantages from it.

This Evening or to Morrow Morning I hope to Be with your Excellency, and Beg leave to Request you will Honor me with a letter that will meet me on the Road and Let me know How matters Are.

With the Highest Respect I have the Honor to Be your Excellency's

Most Obedient Humble Servant,
Lafayette

Addressed: His Excellency Governor Jefferson.

VIII

Head Quarters May 29th, 1781.

Sir,

Sir, The Enemy's Movements into the Country, and our great deficiency in Cavalry, makes it absolutely necessary that two hundred dismounted Dragoons, under the Command of Col: White are immediately furnished with Horses, for this purpose I have directed Col: White to fix upon some Place of safety to equip his Men, and send them to the Field to accomplish which I must request the favor of your Excellency to order all the acouterments, and arms in the possession of the Militia, and in the different parts of this State to be sent to Col: White, and he empowered to employ Persons, to impress two hundred Horses fit for the Dragoon service, on the South side of James River and in any other part of the State your Excellency may please to direct; I flatter myself the adopting this mode without loss of time, will meet with your Excellency approbation, as I can assure you nothing else will put it in my power to prevent the Enemy from ravaging the Country in small Parties, I have the honor to be

Your Excellency's
most obedt. and very H. servant
Lafayette.

IX

Rawsons ordy 26 June 1781.

6 O'clock A.M.

Dr.Sir

I have been honored with a copy of the act of the General Assembly declaring martial law which was published in orders. I observed to the militia that the leaving the army without a proper permission from their general officer or the carrying off their arms should be severely punished. The arrangements on this head would be pretty perfect, if I could be empowered to tell them that no man is to go home before his relief arrives.

Several people go into the enemy's lines, or upon flag granted by County Lieutenants. This practice is productive of many evils, and I could wish to see it abolished by a proclamation, or circular letter to the Lieutenants of Counties. Many ringleaders I am told have undertaken to encourage the people to accept of a peace on the terms of 63. Should I be able to take them I shall send them to your Excellency. But I hope the retreat of the enemy will put a stop to such proceedings, at least, in the counties back of the army.

Numbers of our militia are daily going home, but few or none joining the army. But I am persuaded your Excellency will give us relief in this point as soon as possible.

On the 23 Lord Cornwallis lay at New Kent Court House. Our army by a march of 22 miles got to M. Savages, on this side bottoms bridge. Our van guard was very near their rear, and Lord Cornwallis troops being very fresh I did not know but that he would attempt an action. The 24 he moved to Birds ordinary, on the 25 towards Williamsburg. We have followed them, and at this moment of things the light corps supported by the Pennsylvanians must be very near Col. Simcoe who brought up the rear. I beg leave to send this letter, as I am going to join the light infantry,

lest reinforcements should render the action (if any) so serious as to engage the whole of the troops I have sent forward.

I beg leave to mention, that the Country and the army seem very anxious to see government reestablished at Richmond, the more so as it will particularly mark the retrograde maneuvre of the enemy.

with the highest regard I have the honor to be, your Excellency's

most obt. sr.

Lafayette.

X

Rawsons Ordinary 26 June 1781.[1]

Dr.Sir

I have the honor to forward a dispatch recommended by the president of Congress, to be sent to you by a particular conveyance Lieut. Stokeley is charged with it, and directed to deliver it into your own hands.

Lord Cornwallis was at Birds yesterday, from which place he retired with his main body, into Williamsburg. We have been pressing his rear, with our light parties, supported by the army, but his Lordship has proceeded so cautiously, and so covered his marches with his cavalry, that it has been, under our circumstances, next to impossible to do him any injury.

From present appearances, it would seem, that the ancient capital is to be a garrisoned place, and, perhaps, a small post established at York.

With the greatest regard, I have the honor to be Dr Sir your most obt ser^{t}

Lafayette

Addressed: Thomas Jefferson Esq^{r}.

[1] *Jefferson papers,* Library of Congress.

XI

tyree's plantation 1st july 1781.

My dear Sir,

I had yesterday the pleasure to see Mayor Calles and am happy to find you Have Established a chain of expresses between this Camp and the seat of Governement (I hope my several letters advising you of the Enemy's Retreat from Richmond, their arrival at Williamsburg and a very clear scurmish that took place some days ago have been safely transmitted).—Should the seat of governement be transferred to Richmond our Correspondance will be easier, and public service much benefited.

(By the utmost care to avoid infected grounds we have hitherto got clear of the small pox.—I wish the harvest time might be as easily got over—.But there is no keeping the militia into the field. the three Brigades are so amazingly Reduced that to have them of a tolerable strength I have been obliged to put them into two—they are commanded by generals stevens and Lawson whom I have requested to have returns made by Counties and to forward them to your Excellency.

Many and many men are daily deserting. But it is next to impossibility to take them in their flight through the woods—the other day a Captain of Horse was sent after a Captain of foot whom he could never get hold of—they have no reason to complain, they cannot even conceive any, but say they were only engaged for six weeks and the Harvest time recalls them home.

On the other hand the times of a great many are daily expiring—no relief comes to them, and you might as well stop the flood tide as to stop militia whose times are out—the Riflemen are determined to go and take care of their harvest so that I shall be left with the continentals. Under

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these circumstances it should perhaps be better to go and fight Lord Cornwallis.—But exclusive of my daily expectation of general Morgan however disappointed I may have been as to his strength, exclusive of the diminution of force I have already experienced, I confidentially will confess with you that I am terrified at the consequences of a general defeat. you are not stranger to the political state of Europe every thing bears for the present a tolerable peace, New York threatened, Carolina reconquered, lord Cornwallis pushed into Williamsburg after a long retreat, such is the situation of affairs in America that may be laid before mediators—But should we be beat and should the loss of Virginia follow a defeat new obstacles will be raised against American independency.

An order to the County lieutenants throughout the State immediately to lend to the army every six month soldier, and a call of militia to come immediately into the field are steps of an absolute necessity—I think, my dear Sir, severe examples ought to be made of County lieutenants who neglect to send either the six month soldiers or their quotas of militia—Unless a large number is immediately joined to us, we must measure back the ground we have obtained over his lordship.

Two militia Brigades of 1600 each in four Regiments so as to have 1200 fit for duty, and a Rifle brigade of the same number ought alwais to be kept into the field—it would be 4400 upon paper and 3600 effectives—this I would propose to be exclusive of the 6 month men the totality of whom ought to be immediateley sent and put under continental officers. Besides this number to be with the army, the Counties North of Rappaannock, the Counties near portsmouth ought to be destined the ones to the defense of the Neck and fredericksburg the others to have a permanent force of about thousand men blockading portsmouth and prevent-

ing detachements from that place—glocester county had better be kept for its own defence—I have sent them 200 stand of arms.

Should it be possible to raise two corps of volunteer dragoons of 120 each divided into two troops of sixty, mounted upon their own horses, regularly embodied under proper officers, and as accoutrements cannot be procured armed with spears I think they might render service. But I wish your Excellency would make a proclamation declaring that every volunteer horse who does not belong to a corps the Commander of which has my writen orders is not only liable to militia duty but also will be brought to an account for the forage and provisions he may get into the Country.

I beg leave to suggest to your Excellency the propriety of raising a corps of 250 nigroe pionners to march with the army and also a corps of hundred nigroe waggonners—they might be easily got and would afford great services.

Baron de Stüben is gone for some days to Charlotteville—I have requested him to give his assistance to the recruiting of our Country—there must be a great quantity of accoutremens in the country—By a letter from the Board of war I find that 100 saddles, 100 sword, 100 pairs of pistols may soon be expect at Wm.burg supposing that the same number be got in the country; as Cox must easily have collected more than 200 horses; you see that the 50 old dragoons that might be gathered in this State, and 150 new levies we should mount accompagnied with 50 fresh horses for the Continental dragoons we now have may at once give us 300 Horse—supposing 200 volunter *gentlemen* for they ought to be men of fortune and well mounted to be immediately embodied and called into the field, your Excellency will see that there may be a prospect of becoming superior to the enemy's Cavalry—But it requires great diligence, and I entreat your excellency particular aid on that so very im-

portant point every horse that comes to camp, I send up either to Charlotteville or Richmond there to be subject to your orders—Impresses I beg leave to consider as a civil matter, and will receive such a number of horses from the executive as have been collected by their authority; Col: Call is going up for that same affair and to him I beg leave to refer your Excellency.

I have alwaïs the same complaints to make against the Commissary department a letter from you to them threatening the severest punishments in case the Army is left in the least want may have a great effect.—I wish you will write them I have been requested to have these punishments inflicted the first hour the army wants any kind of provisions. However the past days we have done rather better—there should be some arrangement made concerning waggons—at least every county ought immediately to send in tax waggons.—New powers might be lodged with the Commissary general to apply to the county lieutenants for so many waggons as are necessary to the Communication between this shore and camp with them men to drive and men to keep a guard.

Permit me, my dear Sir, once more to insist upon an immediate call of militia—Both brigade are not quite so large as Mülhenberg's Brigade has been, and still less are fit for duty, fevers begin to spread—I have taken the liberty to call for a third of the militia of some adjacent counties should you disaprove of it we may countermand, if not I request you will enforce my letter.

A paragraph from the executive denouncing the severest punishment to civil officials who do not immediately apprehend desertors, and ascertaining if the militia are to wait for the relieves is of an immediate necessity for they are all going a way

Shoes for the light infantry, and resin are two articles upon which I entreat your good offices.

Most respectfully
yours Lafayette

P.S. Verdier of Armand's corps an excellent officer has been taken while in the execution of an important commission from the baron—I promised him his horse (a very valuable one) should be replaced—and beg leave to request he may have a choice in the impressed horses.

XII

Plantation July the 1st, 1781.[1]

I Have Been Honoured with your favor of the 14th and while I am to thank you for the pains You took of Acquainting me with particulars Relative to Col. Ross I feel a sincere pleasure in this opportunity to Continue our Correspondance—the Honor of Hearing from you shall ever be wellcome, and I Beg leave from time to time present you with the Camp Gazette and with the assurance of My Affectionate Regard.

I Had some days ago the Honor of transmitting a letter which the president of Congress Called a very important one—Should my suspicions prove true I Congratulate the Cause in General upon this Choice, and Beg leave to assure you that on every [*torn*] be Happy to make any Commun [*torn*] to your present purposes.

With the Highest Regard and a Sincere Attachment
I Have the Honor to be
Dear Sir,
Your Most obedient Humble
Servant
Lafayette.

Since My last His Lordship has remained into Williamsburg.

Addressed: Honbe Th. Jefferson.

[1] *Jefferson papers,* Library of Congress.

XIII

Head Qrs. 20 Miles From W*ms* burg.
3d July 1781.

Dr. Sir,

I received your favour of the 25th ulto. Mr. Anderson and Mr. Hayes have been mentioned to the Commissary of Prisoners agreeable to your former requisition, and instructions given him to exchange them if possible.—I think with you that the Dragoons had better come with Hunting shirts than be delayed; but I would wish them by all means to have Boots than not to wait for them. As many of the troops are entirely without shoes I must request you to use your best endeavours to procure and forward supply of that article.—It will be necessary to have some Arms at Fredericksburg, but a small number, exclusive of what are in the Hands of the Militia their own property will suffice—a thousand stands at Hanover Court House with waggons ready to remove them at the shortest warning word, some for such militia as may be called in from the adjacent Counties—the remainder may be sent to Charlottesville—Major Call is gone up the Country for the very purpose mentioned in yours—any requisition from him, many arrangements proposed by Baron de Steuben I request you to comply with.

I have the Honor to be
your most obedient servant
Lafayette.

Addressed: Col. Daveis.

XIV

July 10th 1781

Dr Sir,

I have a thousand pardons to ask for not having written you sooner. But I knew you would not be without intelligence. Since the skirmish I had to go to James town, to Williamsburg, to our several hospitals—I had arrangements to make in the army—letters to write to the Northward and a hundred affairs besides, on my hands.

Inclosed you will find a copy of my public lettre. It gives a detail of every thing that has past I have collected it from observation of my own, and deserters.—Indeed it was high time my Lord should retreat for our militia are vanishing daily. I hope your Excellency will hurry the reliefs that the evacuation of the state be as much forwarded as possible. I would beg leave particularly to recommend that all the horses wanting for Washington and White be immediately completed.

By accounts from the Southward I am affraid General Greene has been obliged to retire, and of course we must endeavour to support him.

If any execution, as any manouvre of ours has produced advantage to the State, and if we are able to see it yet more entirely freed from the enemy, I shall think myself one of the happiest men upon earth.

It gives me pleasure to think that while the enemy were anxious to fight, not one gun was fired, but the moment they declined coming to action we made it our business to force them to partial engagements followed by general retreats.

The official letter is only intended for your private satisfaction and that of your friends you will be pleased to shew it to the Baron.

I have the honor to be with the greatest regard, Dr. Sir

your Excellency's

Lafayette obt s.

Addressed: Governor Nelson.

XV

Holts forge

12 July 1781.

Sir,

Capn Rudolph the bearer of this has been sent to me by General Greene, with the most pressing and particular request to have Col. Lee's Legion completed. The General is apprehensive of the worst effects of the enemy's superiority in horse; and that every thing ruinous to the Southern States is to be feared from this cause. He wishes therefore that as many horse may be impressed as will mount the whole of the cavalry. It is upon this representation, I would request an impress warrant, authorizing Capn Rudolph, to seize or procure 100 horses in such places as you may direct, or where he may establish his rendez vous.

I would also beg leave to suggest to your Excellency a permission for him to enlist 100 dragoons, 100 infantry and 60 rifle men. A little money however will be necessary in the execution of this part of his business, I make no doubt, but with this, he will be able to answer our expectation either in the country or among the exchanged prisoners, which are daily looked for at James Town from Charleston

The services rendered by his corps are such that we cannot give it too much encouragement.

I have the honor to be, Sir, your Excellency's

ob. s^{t}.

Lafayette

Addressed: His Excellency Governor Nelson.

XVI

Head Quarters Long bridge

13th July 1781

Sir,

The enemy in this quarter, pointing one part towards Portsmouth; with their legions on the route towards South Carolina, makes me conclude that the latter at least are intended to unite with Rawdon. When we add to this, the reenforcement lately arrived at Charlestown, which compelled G. Greene to raise the siege of Glo., and his present critical situation, I could not scruple in sending a detachement to his relief. This has marched this morning and is composed of the Pennsylvanians and the Virginia new levy Rgts under Gen. Wayne. But as this force is inadequate to G. Greene's wants the whole not exceeding 800—I have to request that your Excellency will order to assemble at or near Taylor's ferry on Roanoke, not less than one thousand militia to march with Gen. Wayne, but whose times of service are not to commence till joined with General Greene. These will not only be absolutely necessary to the latter, but it may be impracticable for G. Wayene to proceed without them. Should Lord Cornwallis detachement enterprise any thing against Innes, we have everything to dread from his vast superiority.

There are other reasons however to induce this measure. If we do not want them beyond the Roanoke, we may in this Quarter. The enemy has not yet left the State. And should he again turn himself this way; we shall certainly want not only them, but a much greater number.

I am persuaded this matter will strike your Excellency as it has done me. That at all events it is proper to succour Greene, in order, at least, to keep him where he is. For the nearer we suffer him to approach this State, the more will

our difficulties increase. And should we be fortunate enough to give him any advantage over the enemy, we shall feel its operations in proportion to its magnitude.

I would only add that the detachment I have made, is chiefly in consequence of intelligence I have received of the enemy's preparing for an embarkation; And that should the Legions attempt our stores; by calling out the militia, we render their return a very hazardous manoeuvre.

A few days since I mentioned to you the precaution of moving our stores, in case the enemy should look that way which I hope has not miscarried.

I have the honor to be
your Excellency's
most ob. sert
Lafayette

Addressed: His Excellency Governor Nelson
Charlottesville

The Express to ride day and night.
Lafayette M.g.
Public service.

Endorsed: Recd 14 ford. 14.
Marquis Fayette Letter 13 July 81

XVII

Malvern Hill 21st july 1781.

Sir,

(The Assembly of this Common wealth) sensible of the dangers which for want of Cavalry threatened this and neighbouring state, (were pleased to empower me) under certain restrictions (to have) such Horses and (such a number of Horses impressed as I would think necessary for that service from motives of delicacy and tenderness for the Rights of the people, I took the liberty to request you when Brigadier general and commanding the militia to have this matter carried into execution—in hope that your knowledge of particular persons and your zeal for the liberties of the citizens would as much as possible render the mode of impress suitable to their feelings—the same motives induced me not to meddle into this matter further than to repeat and wholly to let it rest with the executive which no doubt is the proper channel.

I beg leave to propose that a general return be asked for of horses that have been impressed—few have been taken by my orders) Some have been impressed by Major Nelson—some by the quarter Master general in the field—these gentlemen will be directed to send proper returns to your Excellency.

As to the employment of the said horses that have already been attributed to the Cavalry service—put in mounting field officers, whom on their embarkation the commander in chief allowed to receive public horses their own having being disposed of in the beginning of the winter, and every means of transporting or subsisting them being refused the general Vaughan thought it but just they should be furnished with public horses—Some other purposes too tedious to be minutely mentionned in this letter have also obliged me to

make use of impressed horses. the number is but small and has very little weight in the general state.

What is important is to know where the horses impressed by your Excellency's or my orders have been deposited and examine into the just causes of complaint of some inhabitants.

I aprehend many horses that have been impressed by volunteers who not only had no authority but are utterly unknown to me and to your Excellency. I gave the late governor a copy of my general orders on the occasion, and requested him to have them printed and sent to the several counties.

Independant of these horses there is a great quantity of accoutrements belonging to the Continental and to the state in the several counties—the greatest abuses have been committed on this head by volunteers—I take the liberty to request that every part of public accoutrements be ordered to Charlottesville, and in case of non obedience coërcive measures taken by the Executive.

it should also be well that in paying a düe compliment to such volunteer dragoons as have been embodied in the army your Excellency would forbid the appearance of such volunteers as refuse to acknowledge a Command.

I have the honor to be with great respect y. E-y
most obedient humble
servant
Lafayette.

Addressed: His Excellency The Governor

XVIII

Malvern Hill; july 23 1781.

Sir,

A number of prisoners belonging to different states have in consequence of the Cartel been landed at james town. I had already the honor of mentionning them to your Excellency, and know that means have been taken for their relief.—I however thought my duty to lay before you this official application.

The exchanged and parolled officers want to join their respective lines or states.—Many citizens taken as militia must either remain here or go to philadelphia until Carolina is reconquered. Such as are exchanged must at least get out of the enemy's way—They will want monney horses, and waggons—the liberal sentiments that actuate the State of Virginia will no doubt prompt her to take an equal care of Every American who has suffered for our noble cause.

The parolled, exchanged, and exchangeable prisoners are in want of provisions—Commissaries have been sent there by me—but this department is so badly managed that I cannot have any dependance upon it—give me leave to request Sir, that your Excellency will please to give orders for the relief and subsistance of these troops.

Where ever there is no pains for the bad no reward for the good, men are often apt to neglect their duty, and this is the case with the Commissary Department. Richmond or in neighborhood, if small pox seizes, will be a good place of Rendésvous for the exchanged prisoners—they are for the present near james town or williamsburg where the Hospital is established.

With the highest respect I have the honor to be
your Excellency's
Most obedient Humble servant
Lafayette.

XIX

Goods Bridge 24 July 1781

Sir,

agreeable to your orders I proceeded to Colonel Edmund Friends and there received 20 pieces of oznaling and 4 barrels containing boots and shoes public property.

I am sorry to inform you the situation I found them in. The barrels had been opened and appeared to have been culled and picked I then ordered them re-packed, and the whole remaining did not fill three of the same barrels. The others had been embezzled. Colº Friend informed me that on the 21st of July two men had been with him, and said they had orders to procure of contract for Shoes with the inhabitants, that each of them took a pair of boots, and he thinks shoes likewise.

There is also stored at that place a quantity of public flour arms accoutrements Flints etc,—without guard, lock, or even a door to secure them. I have brought a few flints and turn screws as will appear in my receipt

I am Sir, yr hble servant
(signed)
Geo. North. Lt & Q M.B.

Addressed: Gen. Wayne

N.B. Inclosed is a return of the articles received.

XX

Malvern Hill July 27th 81.

Sir

I have received your Excellency's letter of yesterday and shall make the best use I can of the powers that are left with me for appointing Officers to impress ordered by the Executive—the choice I have made and the instructions I give (Copy of which are herein inclosed) will I hope prevent any reasonable cause of discontent.

General Weidon has from the beginning of the invasion been stationed at Fredericksburg for the purpose which your Excellency mentions—I have no doubt but what he will take proper measures—I have not for some days heard of the fleet in Hampton Road—A silence which I cannot account for but by a supposition the fleet has not sailed—and yet, I am surprised of this delay, as the winds have been for some time favorable.

I shall take measures to increase Col. Ennises command—indeed if I am to judge from our circumstances I am apt to believe he has not any body with him—the Militia that goes far exceeds the numbers that we receive—but I hope that this will soon alter for the better—Both Brigades are extremely weake.

I am sorry for the establishment of a post at Point Comfort.

I will try to have the Ennemy annoyed—but give me leave to observe that while two or three thousand men are in Hampton Road it would become dangerous to carry any serious opperations down that much—we must depend upon what Col. Ennis may effect.

Inclosed is the copy of a general order I gave some time ago which Governor Jefferson was to have sent to the

County Lieutenants to have them communicated to the People.

I hope Your Excellency will soon be able to have a light press in the Cappital which may answer very good purposes

with the highest respect I have the honor to be
your Excellency's
most obdt Humble
serv.
Lafayette.

XXI

Malvern Hill, 27th July 1781.

Sir,

Capn Segond, one of our officers from Charleston waits upon your Excellency for part of that provision which you were good enough to charge yourself with, for officers of his description. He is of Gen. Polaski's legion, and of course belongs to no state. He will want a horse, and, perhaps may have some continental money to change for that of this State. If your Excellency would order horses of an inferior quality to those for the dragoon service, I would imagine they would answer as well on such occasions as the present.

I have the honor to be
Sir
your o. St.
Lafayette.

XXII

Malvern Hill July 27th 81

Sir

Inclosed I have the honor of transmitting your Excellency a paragraph of a letter from Col Parker—and some papers mentioned in it

I have the honor
to be
your Excellency's
Most obt Humble Ser.
Lafayette.

Addressed: His Excellency Governor Nelson.

XXIII

Malvern Hill, 29th July 1781.

Sir,

I have been honored with your Excellency's letter of the 28th.

It cannot be more the wish of the Executive, than it is my wish, that no further reinforcements are necessary for the Southward. But, the enemy remaining here does not lessen this necessity. Whether he continues in his present situation, or commences fresh ravages in the State, we shall find that to succour General Greene is our best relief. It is a maxim with me, that the more troops we send him, the less we shall want them here. Indeed, it is one way of compelling the enemy to leave us, or at least to force him to detach, without the risque of a battle—My opinion therefore would be, were I to address again the Executive on the same subject rather to increase than diminish the proposed reinforcement.

But there are other reasons to be drawn from present appearances. A French naval superiority is not an impossible event. Some accounts speak of it. The embarkation which has taken place, is, most probably, intended for New York. It is large enough for Potomack, and, had this been its destination it has several days the most favorable winds. But as it seems to be complete, its not going is a proof that it is designed for some other quarter. Admitting, then, the idea of a naval superiority, the doubtefulness of its object may also call up their fears for Charlestown; and this may occasion a second detachement; Under this aspect the Southern reenforcement will be of the utmost consequence. But admitting the enemy's force to the Southward, to receive no addition, to confine it to Charlestown, must have the happiest effect. England has not scrupled to announce

to every court in Europe that she is in full possession of Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia. This will be the strongest argument we can offer; short of the reduction of Charlestown, to convince them of its falsity, and to give our commissioners a proper weight, should the negociation for peace be renewed in the winter. But independent of these considerations there are two arguments which I do not know how to answer. If we do not send the militia, we may be obliged to send the Continentals; and should neither go, we shall defeat General Greene's plans, and give him cause to complain of failures occasioned by our disappointing him in promised succours.

Before I quit this subject, I would beg leave to observe to your Excellency, that sooner than the 2000 militia can rendez vous at Boyd's ferry, we must have a pretty perfect explanation of the enemy's intentions. In this view, and provided the call from General Greene should be less urgent than it may be here, we shall have them in readiness to join this army. And should the enemy hold a post at Portsmouth, they may give us an opportunity of acting instantly, in a case, which, perhaps, may not admit of much delay; and, which also from the necessity of different attacks, call for a still further reinforcement.

I perceive in all this the difficulty of getting arms, the length of such a march, and how much averse the people may be to undertake it. But, at the same time, I confide in the exertions of the Executive to obviate the first; and as the advantages from sending them counterbalance these evils, and those which we might experience here, should their services be wanted, I am persuaded your Excellency will not hesitate in promoting the measure in its fullest extent.

Permit me to suggest the necessity of collecting the heavy cannon of the state, and such military matters as are wanted

in a siege, should we be fortunate enough to be able to do anything against Portsmouth.

With the most perfect respect,
I have the honor to be, Sir,
your Excellency's
most ob St
Lafayette

Addressed: His Excellency Governor Nelson.

XXIV

Malvern Hill 29th July 1781.

Dr. Sir

The plan for drawing money mentioned in your Excellency's letter of the 27th is that I have always adopted. All orders on the treasury, come from your Excellency, the pay master is only in my province.—The note to Major Call intended, in case no money was in his hands—that your Excellency should give efficacy to the warrant by your signature.

It is but the other day I advised Col. Parker, that martial law had been proclaimed, and that all military crimes, committed within twenty miles of the enemy's lines, or twenty miles of our army, are of course cognizable by military law—On receipt of the proclamation it was published in General orders.—It is usual for the adjutant general of our army to transmit orders of an extensive application to detached parts, but I do not believe it has been done in this instance upon the supposition that the Assembly or the Executive would have directed copies to the Lieutenants of the several counties.

Agreeable to your letter of the 27 by Mr. Harrison I have given this gentleman instructions to apply to your Excellency for such sums as may be necessary to adavance to the prisoners for Charleston.

I have the honor to be, Sir, your Excellency's
most ob^{t} s^{t}
Lafayette.

Addressed: His Excellency
Governor Nelson.

XXV

New Castle August 6th 1781.

dear Sir,

I Have wrote a long letter to the Governor Relating to Several articles which will be Refered to you, and which will claim a very particular attention—I have no doubt But what you will do the Best you can to Help me.—indeed the want of men, and the want of arms and ammunition render our situation very precarious—it is impossible to persuade the Militia into a Care of their Arms—could not this Be Resolved By the Executive that every man who Returns public arms in Bad order shall serve fifteen days more.—the Ennemy are at York and Glocester where they Begin to fortify—The Hopes of a Reconciliation Between England and Holland are entirely lost—with the Highest Regard and sincere attachement

yours

Lafayette.

Addressed: Col. Daveis

Board of war

Richmond.

Lafayette M.g.

XXVI

Headquarters 6 Augt 1781.—

Sir,

Doctor Tucker who will have the honor to deliver your Excellency this letter, gives me such a detail of the suffering of our sick prisoners at Williamsburg, for want of necessaries, as is extremely distressing. Nothing has been provided, and of course everything is wanted.

With your permission I would solicit a sum of money for the Doctor, which he will put into the hands of the hospital purveyor, for their relief, and which your Excellency will order to be charged to the account of the United States.

The Doctor will be best judge of the sum; and I hope the large draughts on the treasury for the officer prisoners from Charleston, which you have been so kind as to grant, will not operate against the present application.

I have the honor to be Sir, your Excellency's most ob. st.

Lafayette.

Addressed: His Excellency Governor Nelson.

XXVII

New Castle, August the 6th 1781.

Sir,

however small is the number of our Militia, yet there is such a scarcity of arms in Camp that those who are coming in cannot be furnished with weapons of any sort. There is I know a multiplicity of abuses on this article owing to neglect in some militia officers, want of chests to carry the arms in. and want of a proper number of artificers to repair them—on the first point I shall repeat orders and recommend obedience, in the two others, I must have recourse to your Excellency and the State Board of war. it is less difficult to multiply artificers than to enforce strict discipline among Militia, and a sufficient quantity of chests ought to be provided. But it is of an immediate importance that we do speedily receive a supply of arms equal to the expected reenforcement.

We are also in want of Cartridges, and are to request a supply of Ammunition from the State laboratory. I have done my best to prevent a waste of cartridge. But independant of neglects the deficiency of cartrich boxes must render it difficult for the men to procure ammunition.

Give me lease, Sir, to demand your Excellency of the affair of the Boats—I shall also take the liberty to repeat my wishes respecting the Collection of Cannon tool and other apparatus of that kind.

It appears that lord Cornwallis intends to fix a post at York and gloucester and there erect fortifications—this no doubt is a new plan the motives of which are not sufficiently explained. My situation is not equal to the defensive—much less so to any offensive purposes—part of our militia are unarmed. and the totality of them is very unadequate to every military purpose. I am however moving down, but in

hope that the Executive will have our situation altered for the best.

It is I think important that the Corps, under Clel Parker be speedily reinforced—the more we move from the side the more important it is to keep the enemy within bounds prevent their detaching to the Southward and perhaps improve opportunities—inclosed is my letter to general Lawson Should the executive agree in opinion with me, I request they will immediately send the letter and add proper powers to it—so that there may be 4 or five hundred men there.

By letter from philadelphia it appears the Negotiation between England and Holland through a Russian mediation is entirely broke up, and every idea of a partial peace given up for the present.

With the highest Respect I have the honor to be dear Sir

your Ecellency

Most obedient and re. servant

Lafayette.

May I take the liberty to remind your Excellency of the affair respecting horses lost by Claiborne's [?] corps.

Addressed: His Excellency Governor Nelson.

XXVIII

Camp on Pamunkey August 7th 1781.

Sir,

Agreeable to the desire of your Excellency and Council Mr. McHenry Has the Honor to wait upon you, and will lay before the Executive Matters Relative to the Operations of the Army.

Forming Magazines and Ascertaining the Ressources of the Country—Collecting Every kind of arms, and Ammunitions either State or Continental—insuring our Means of transportation—improving what men we have and procuring those we ought to have in the Continental line are Considerations of great importance.

I am very sensible, Sir, of your difficulties—I am no less sensible that the Executive are as deeply interested as Myself in the public welfare—on the first Account it is useless to Complain—on the second it is a folly—I wish to surmount obstacles, and in this I sollicit the Honor to Cooperate with the Executive of this State—Whatever Means are put into my Hands I shall endeavour to use, and with pleasure I see that the State is Capable of exertions that will, if properly made insue in safety.

Your Excellency's letter relative to General Waine is sent to that officer. I Hope this proceedings may Be explained to the satisfaction of governement and the people.—I trust Every officer in this army will Be equally desirous with me to procure Harmony and good order

With the Highest Respect I Have the Honor to be
dear Sir,
Your Excellency's
Most obedient hble.
servant,
Lafayette

Addressed: His Excellency Governor Nelson.

XXIX

Camp 12th August 1781.[1]

Sir,

I have made a demand of all militia taken by the british before the 15th of June to which there has been no answer returned The moment I receive one it shall be transmitted if unfavorable and such steps taken for the relief of the chesterfield militia as may seem to promise success.

I inclose your Excellency extracts from General Wayne's letter to me on the subject of my letter to him respecting the seizure of some cloathing.—The shoes being absolutely indispensible for our movements, I will take the liberty to order their distribution between such of the Virginians and Pennsylvanians as want them most. The boots and a small part of the linen, your Excellency will observe has been properly applyed. And that the remainder is subject to your orders or Colo Davis's.

Considering circumstances I hope you will approve of my arrangement in this affair.

With the highest respect I have the honor to be
Sir
your Excellency's mo.ob.servant
(signed)
lafayette

Addressed: His Excellency
Governor Nelson.

[1] A copy made by a secretary; the original seems to be lost.

XXX

Camp 13 Augt 1781.

Sir,

I not only approve of the institution of a State commissary of military stores, but of the person whom you have mentioned for this office. Capn Fryer from his general knowledge in military matters and particularly his late experience in the Commissariate department, is no doubt a most competent officer.—I could have wished him for another department; but I must look out for one, the want of whose services in this line, will be less felt by the State.

You know the expedition which first produced the detachment of light infantry, and the causes which prevented its return to the army, agreeable to the original instruction. It came out with little clothing, and their marches by the time they reached Virginia left the poor fellows almost naked. The few articles which some of the counties furnished, were very necessary; so much so, that the good citizens who saw them, thought that no troops could want them more. And yet, what we procured was inconsiderable. But, notwithstanding this, I always intended either to repay the loan, or to certificate for them on the public account.—I have some clothing on the way for the infantry—but there will be a difficulty in discharging the debt with these as General Washington gave out to the men that this clothing should follow them, and I have assured them of the same thing, and that it had left Head Quarters. If you think, however, that I can repay the State under such circumstances and promises, I will do it, altho' it must leave the infantry naked. But should you be of opinion that it will be better to consider what has been received from the State as a Continental debt, I wish you to prescribe the form of a voucher which will make it one.

Mr. McHenry mentioned to me your request for a few tanners. If there are any among the Virginia levies, I will subject them to your orders. But, for reasons which must occur to yourself, it will not be in my power to draught them from the infantry or Pennsylvanians.

I wish to know, as a number of the Virginia levies and Pennsylvanians are without overhalls or breeches, whether we might not have some made for them out of the oznabrig which has been seized, and charge it to the Continent.

Let me mention also, that above all things it is necessary we should attend to the instant providing of our cavalry for the field. General Greene says to me, in a letter of the 28th ulto—" Pay all possible attention to equipping the cavalry, as the enemy are increasing theirs by every means in their power, and a great superiority must undoubtedly give them the Country.

With the greatest respect, I have the honor to be, Sir,

your obt. hble. ser.

Lafayette.

Will it not be possible to complete a quantity of the several articles of clothing necessary for the Virginia levies. This will be a great point. If these are clothed it will be an encouragement for others to enlist.

Addressed: Col. Daveis.

XXXI

Camp Forks of York river
16th Aug[t] 1781.

Sir,

Col. Innes is now on the Gloster driving off the stock and making a forage. His force appears to restrain the enemy's small parties. I would have ordered the militia you speak of, could I have done it without exposing the Northern neck to be plundered by privateers. They will also be a check should Lord Cornwallis advance towards Fredericksburg.

The enemy have drawn a reinforcement from Portsmouth without evacuating the place. Their principal force is at Glocester, and from some circumstances it would seem as if a movement was intended.

Col. Matthews covers the York side, and has my orders to communicate any move towards Richmond.

You ask me respecting the militia. They do not come in fast, and what have arrived are generally without arms.

Our Quarter Master's department under Major Jones cannot move any longer without a supply of money. I have taken the liberty to draw a warrant on the pay master in his favor for £50,000. I would observe however that this sum is too inconsiderable to be of much service; and that without more money can be had, I know not what we shall do. Majr Jones sends one of his assistants to Richmond to lay before your Excellency his wants, and to call up upon the Quarter Master General, for such succour as he can afford.

I have the honor to be Sir
your ob. servt.
Lafayette.[1]

As an instance of the negligence of Militia in turning out I beg leave to send the included return which I receive at

[1] This part except the signature was written by a secretary. The post scriptum is in Lafayette's own hand.

the moment this letter was writing—the Rockingam militia ought I think to be 150—Here is the number that are arrived.

I cannot conceive what our Commissaries are about—it is almost an age since flour has been seen in Camp—not even for the officers—as to Meat it is to have that the Army is very often particularly this day upon half allowance soap and candles are entirely out of the question—meat is hardly eatable—the Commissaries put the whole upon the account of transportation—I beg your Excellency's pardon for this minuted detail—but you have so obligingly requested me to give them to you from time to time that I am Bound to do it on passing occasions.

XXXII

Camp Fork's of York
17 Augt 1781.

Sir,

I have been honored with your Excellency's letter of the 15th.

Inclosed is a copy of my letter to Mr Clayborne, which I am in hopes will put our business in a train, and at least, make Mr Gouen feel his mistake.

I have the honor to be
Sir,
your Excellency's
most obt. Sr.
Lafayette

Addressed: His Excellency
Governor Nelson.

XXXIII

Camp 19th Aug^{t} 1781.

Sir,

I have been honored with your Excellency's letter of the 16th.

I am much obliged by your great attention to our want of waggons, and trust what has been done, and is doing will give us effectual relief.

On the 18th Col Innes made a forage towards Gloster, with a very inconsiderable loss: only three men and two horses were taken. I have ordered even all the cavalry (they will cross at Frazers to-night) and a regiment of the infantry to make a more general one, which I hope to effect, unless the enemy should move up in considerable force.

Lord Cornwallis has directed the families of such persons as have left York, to remove with their efects by the 22 of this month. Some of the Gentlemen concerned have gone down to-day to see if vessels may be permitted to bring them off.

I have the honor to be Sir, your Excellency's most obt s.

Lafayette

Addressed: His Excellency Governor Nelson
Richmond.

Endorsed: Marquis Lafayette 19 August, 81.
Recd 21 Aug.

XXXIV

Head Quarters 20th Augt 1781.

Sir,

Mr Jones, the Continental field commissary of military stores having represented that he cannot proceed in the execution of his department without a supply of money, I have to request from your Excellency, your order on the Treasury in his favor for, a sum no less than thirty thousand pounds

I have the honor to be
Sir,
your Excellency's
most obt. set.
Lafayette.

Out of the entire fleet consisting of 30 sails—24 taken by Mr de la motte picket—6 by french privateer the rest fled to Ireland and of course the so much talked of plunder snapped out of the Enemy's hands.

Addressed: His Excellency Govr Nelson.

XXXV

Camp 20th Augt. 1781.

Sir,

From Lord Cornwallis's movements and the intelligence which I have received, it would appear that he is on the point of becoming active. As he has given time to us to collect and arrange our force it will no doubt make part of his policy to distract us as much as possible in order the better to cover his principal intention. Under these circumstances, as well as to guard against any sudden operation on the South side of James River; or to improve occasions, or to make a diversion in our favor, I beg to recommend the calling out a body of 600 militia to rendez vous at Black river under the command of Gen. Lawson. These should be complete in every thing, and in the most perfect readiness, either to reinforce me, or to act as circumstances may require.

This body will also cover and support our magazines on the River—the formation of which becomes every day more and more essential, at the places I have mentioned.

General Lawson will take command of all the militia on the South side of James river. But I will write him particularly when I am favored with your answer.

I have the honor to [be]
Sir
your Excellency's
most ob serv.
Lafayette

Addressed: His Excellency
Governor Nelson.

Endorsed: Marquis Received 21, and desired Col. Davis to prepare Letters for corps of militia required.

XXXVI

Camp 25th Augt. 1781.

Sir,

Several officers who have been taken since the surrender of Charlestown and who do not come under the description which authorized me to draw warrants have applied for this purpose. I beg leave to request that your Excellency will inform me wether I may proceed to give warrants to these officers and the extent of the sum.

I have the honor to be
Sir
your Excellency's
most obt servt.
Lafayette.

Addressed: His Excellency Governor Nelson.

XXXVII

Wm Ruffins. 25th Augt 1781.

Sir

Previous to your letter of the 19th (in consequence of a conversation with Mr Pierce) I written to Mr Blaine the Commissary General of purchases to send, as soon as possible a deputy for this district.—I shall always find a pleasure in concurring with any measure which may give relief to the State, or that may serve to place its accounts in a proper light.

I have the honor to be
Sir your
obt serv.
Lafayette.

Addressed: Col. Daveis.
Endorsed: Aug. 25, 1781.

From the Marquis respecting a letter sent to Mr. Blaine to send a deputy for the district as soon as possible etc.

XXXVIII

Camp 26th Aug^{t} 1781.

Sir

I cannot help laying before you the complaints of the army respecting provisions. Eleven days have passed since they had one drop of spirits, consequently the continentals are falling sick; and their diminution is the more to be lamented, as in the manner the militia are going off and no relief coming in these poor continentals will soon become our sole dependence. Another cause of discust is the absolute want of flour; not a grain of which has been seen in camp for a long while.

Many county lt. make it a practice to lessen the tour of duty of their men, and to promise them countenance against the law established by their Representatives of the people, and supported by the authority of the Executive. To this strange practice we may add another which ought to be no less severely punished. A great many of the County commissionners are very remiss in their duty, and as they think no one will ever punish them, they are indifferent to the suffering of the army. Indeed, Sir, unless vigourous measures are adopted, we will be involved deeper and deeper in ruin. Few men in the field; not a sixth part of what is called for,—a greater number without arms—the greatest part of whom live from day to day upon food that is injurious to their health—without six cartridges per man—and the poor continentals that will soon be our only dependence falling off for want of spirits and flour. Such is, my dear Sir, the present situation of this very small corps; Should it be known to Lord Cornwallis he may ruin us at one stroke, and defeat every project that may have been made for the protection of this State.

I have the honor to be with the greatest respect,
Sir,
your Excellency's
most obdt S.
Lafayette

Addressed: His Excellency Governor Nelson.

XXXIX

Camp 30th August 1781

Dr Sir

Captn Diglasbuck of the continental army has prayed me for an order for some articles of clothing. I have none of these under my order, but if you will be pleased to direct the State have to deliver him what little he may want this letter is intended to make it a Continental debt.

I am Dr. Sir

your obt. s.

Lafayette.

Addressed: Col Davis

August 30th 1781

Endorsed: From the Marquis desiring Captain Diglasbuck may be furnished with some articles of cloathing from the state etc.

XL

Holts forge 2d Sept^{r} 1781.

Dr. Sir

Since I had the pleasure of seeing you, I have not been able to procure an intercourse with any of the Commissaries. The French troops are landing at James Town so that I request your Excellency, should any of the commissaries be within your reach, you will do what is necessary on the occasion.

I have the honor to be Dr. S.

Your Excellency most obdt.

Lafayette

Addressed: Govr. Nelson.

XLI

Near Morrel's Mill. 4th Sep[r] 1781.

Dr Sir,

(The French troops are at James Town, and without provisions particularly without one grain of flour). I have not seen, nor cannot find a commissary. Let me intreat your Excellency to forward in vessels all the flour within your reach. The want of provisions is what these troops have neither experienced the last nor that present war.

(Perhaps the General has been more explicit in his letter to your Excellency respecting his route than in that to me. His cavalry may come by land, but, I expect the other troops will come by water from Elk.) The provisions you may have set apart for this purpose can be stored on the Potomack and Rappahannock

I have the honor to be
my dear Sir,
your Excellency's
most ob. ser.
Lafayette.

XLII

Williamsburg, 8th Septr 1781.

Dr Sir,

Mr Mason comes with a great character of his industry and ability in the commissariat line. He will deliver your Excellency this letter and will be able to tell you what is our present situation. I have requested him to forward from Richmond etc. whatever flour etc. he may find. If any governemental assistance is necessary I pray your Excellency to afford it.

I have the honor to be
Dr Sir your Excellency obt.
Lafayette

Addressed: Gov. Nelson
His Excellency
Governor Nelson
Richmond

Endorsed: Marquis de Lafayette
Sept 8th 1781
Red Sept 13, 81.

XLIII

Camp, 6th Sept., 1781.

Dr. Sir

The wants of the hospital, and the demands of the Surgeons are of so pressing a nature, as to induce me to trouble your Excellency for their relief. If money cannot be granted to the purveyor, I beg that the commissaries may be directed to supply the sick in hospital with such provisions and little necessaries as may make their situation more comfortable.

I hope your Excellency will pardon me for asking your attention to the following particulars Linen for bandages and for dressings will soon become a very essential article: let me therefore entreat that some provision of this kind be immediately made.

I have the honor to be dr. Sir your Excellency's most obdt. s;

Lafayette.

Doctor Junifer wi [*torn*]
your Excellency more p [*torn*]
larly of the Situation and wants of the sick.

XLIV

Wiliamsburg, 11th Se^{br}. 1781.
1/2 p.3 o'clock P.M.

Dr.Sir,

I could wish to sleep to-night but I fear it will be impossible with the prospect which is before us for to morrow. There is not one grain of flour in camp either for the American or French army. What we are to do I know not. Had I been apprised that some time would have been necessary for collecting a stock of flour, in this case, the French troops might have remained on ship-board, and we should not have experienced our present situation.

Has your Excellency any hopes for to-morrow? I am distressed in the extreme, in a thousand ways, and without the power of offering either myself or the soldiers the smallest relief.

To-day I wrote to General Weedon to request his assistance in having some of the vessels in Rappahannock, loaded with flour, and in readiness to send round. I am told there are large quanties (*sic*) of flour in that quarter. Can your Excellency issue an order to have it seized, and instantly brought round by water. In the winter of 1780 when the grand army was on the point of disbanding for want of provisions, a large and instant supply was obtained by the seisure of private property.

I have the honor to be
Dr; Sir your Excellency's
most obt sert.
Lafayette.

Addressed: His Excellency
Gov. Nelson

XLV

York October 31st 1781.

Sir,

Before leaving the State in which I had the honor to command the American army I cannot refrain from presenting your Excellency with the homage of my gratitude, and acknowledging the obligations which in a civil and military capacity, I owe to your Excellency's assistance.

The anxiety I feel to obtain the approbation of the people of Virginia, induces me to request a very great favor from your Excellency. It is, that you would be pleased to lay before the honorable the Assembly an account of my conduct in executing their recommandations for the impressement of horse. As this was done often in sight of the enemy, and sometimes, as it were from under their hands, it has been altogether impossible, in every occasion to preserve all those forms which I could have wished. But whatever has been done by my orders, will, I hope, appear to have been conducted in the best method which the moment could admit.

Some months since your Excellency was pleased to communicate a recommandation of the honorable the Assembly respecting the conduct of officers employed at the point of fork. My respect to the Assembly made me extremely desirous to comply with their wishes, but our situation before being joined by General Washington put it wholly out of my Power.

With the most perfect respect and attachment, I have the honor to be, your Excellency's

most obd. svt.
Lafayette

Addressed: His Excellency Governor Nelson.

XLVI

Hartford, October the 11th, 1784.[1]

My dear Sir,

When I Heard of Your going to france, I Heartily lamented I could not Have the Honour to Receive You there, But in the same time Anticipated the pleasure to wait upon you this winter in our french Capital—Your voyage to Europe I ever Considered as a favourite wish of mine, and on every public and private Accident am Happy to think you at last Have Considered to go. promise me, My dear Sir farther to carry my views, and in case our Respected doctor Franklin is indulged in His wished for Retirement, let me Hope my Country May so far Agree with you, as to obtain your Consent for a longer Residence—an event which, Both as a frenchman, and an American, I most warmly desire.

Upon viewing again these Blessed shores of liberty My Heart throbbed for joy, and nothing could add to my satisfaction But the flattering Reception with which I Have Been every where Honoured—I wish it were in My power to make a much longer stay, But will at least employ the time I Have in visiting as many of my friends as I Can—from Mount Vernon to this place I Have Been enjoying their Company in their respective states, and am just from fort Schuyller where it was thought my presence, and even my personal influence with the Indians could be of some public utility.—the Business is just begun, But in case you wish to know the temper of those people, so far as you may discover it in their Answers to me, I think you will find the whole with Count de Vergennes to whom it will be probably sent by M. de Marbois.

[1] To Thomas Jefferson. *Jefferson papers.* Library of Congress.

I am now going to Boston, Rhode island, and By water to Virginia where gen'l Washington is again waiting for me—We will together proceed to Philadelphia, and I intend [to be] at Trenton by the time Congress are met, in order to pay my respects to them—God grant such a foederative system May be fairly followed By all the states, as will insure their eternal union, and of Course their interior Happiness, Commercial Wealth, and National Consequence. Nothing New from Rhode island Respecting the impost—a few Indians Have Broke out towards the new settlements, But nothing of any consequence—Should a little dispute be Mentioned, that happened upon the Back lands of Connecticut and Pennsylvania, it may be affirmed that this trifling affair is Vanishing into Nothing.

My House, Dear Sir, My family, and anything that is mine are entirely at your disposal, and I Beg you will come and see Mde de Lafayette as you would act by your Brother's wife. Her knowledge of the Country May be of some use to Miss Jefferson whom she will be Happy to attend in every thing that may be agreeable to Her.—indeed, My dear Sir, I would be very angry with you, if either you or she, did not consider my House as a second Home, and Mde de Lafayette as very Happy in every opportunity to wait upon Miss Jefferson.

My best and Most Affectionate Respects wait upon doctor Franklin. Be pleased also to remember me to Mr Barklay, young Franklin, and other American friends—should you now be with Mr. Adams, I beg you will present my respects to him. Adieu, My dear Sir; With every sentiment of attachment and Regard I have to Honour to be

Your obedient Humble servant,

Lafayette.

XLVII

Paris, March the 16th 1785.

Dear Sir

Heartily wishing for the Honour of your Correspondance, I am not less desirous to Hope my letter may be entertaining—that advantage, I was near purchasing at the expense of much European blood—But owing to the part france has taken in favour of the dutch, those differences have taken a more pacific turn—the Emperor's plans of an Exchange of his low country dominions for Baviera have, it is said, been also disappointed—so that the threatening war has been, it is hoped, Removed.—and altho the conditions are not known, and preparations now will go on, I do not doubt but what this summer will be much more quiete than had been expected. At the time of my Arrival, very thick clouds were spread—which would have rendered it very improper for me to have stayed in America longer than I did—my departure However was to my Reluctant Heart a painful moment—and I would have still more lamented it, Had I not been impressed with the sanguine expectation to pay you before long an other visit—your Excellency has no doubt seen the trade edict permitting the intercourse with the West indies, in Every particular except flour and sugar, which However were Capital points. But the Regulation, such as it is, has raised a great Clamour Among the Merchants—the more so as they compare it with the same principles of England, notwithstanding which, say they, all the trade of America is going to them—I hope this matter may at last be better understood by the Chambers of Commerce—The Navigation of Mississipy now, in my opinion, is the great object—I have Been, in my Representations to the french Ministry, Candid, pressing and decided—Could it depend upon their good will or their good sense, I would Be very sanguine in my Hopes—But neither

of these two requisites, in matter of Commerce or boundaries, are to be found at a Court, who Consider it as the first of Blessings to Monopolize trade, and to Hold much ground—I think it will be to the Honour of America to act with prudence, and a Moderation not exclusive of firmness; there is no doubt but that England will endeavour to cherish dissensions they have been sowing by their treaty—and I Hartly wish Spain may yield to her own interest, to the Reasons of Congress, the Advices of france, and it pleases me to think, to the first of laws, the laws of nature, and necessity—By Gal. Washington's last letter, I Hear with great satisfaction that the Navigation of your Rivers will be Attended to, and that you are going to improve those Commercial channels, which, thank god, nature has provided for the Advantage of America, and your State in particular—I Beg, my dear Sir, you will present my Best Respects to your family, and all our friends in Virginia and Believe me with Every sentiment of sincere affection and High Respect

dear Sir,

your obedient Humble Servant

Lafayette.

Addressed: His Excellency patrick Henry Esq.

Lafayette, Marie Joseph Paul Y
Lafayette in Virgin><f Congress
MT. MARY COLL. ocm00606639
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